

Camera

Wednesday, Jun 24, 2009

Up to 7,000 participate in Boulder's Bike to Work Day Not a record crowd, but still a strong turnout for breakfast stations across city

By Heath Urie

Just past 6 a.m. on Wednesday, more than 40 Boulder businesses broke out bagels, fruit, organic breakfast bars and hot meals to serve the thousands of people who were participating in this year's Bike to Work Day.

The annual event was expected to draw more than 35,000 across the state, with more than 6,300 registered to participate in Boulder.

Event organizers say the warm weather may have brought out as many as 7,000 riders in Boulder.

At Whole Foods on Pearl Street, dozens of hungry commuters took full advantage of the French toast station. In the spirit of the day, Boulder-based SimpleSolar powered the station using a mobile solar generator.

Boulder resident Ann-Sofie Davis, 33, rides her bike to work about three times each week. Bike to Work Day, however, gives her an added incentive.

"I get free breakfast, and it's a fun thing to do," Davis said.

Christian Grossenbacher, 35, commutes to work every day on his bike. But for those who normally don't, he said, the breakfast stations and socializing that come with the annual ride help lure more people into alternative transportation.

"I think it would be fantastic for more people to get out and do this," he said. "This is the great part about Boulder."

Amy Wright, 24, of Nederland, is among those who don't hop on a bike every day.

Wright, who took the bus from Nederland and decided to ride a few miles to her office job at 55th Street and Valmont Road, said the best part about the change



Photo by Marty Caivano

Henry Wood pulls his son Miller along after leaving the Bike to Work breakfast station at Ideal Market on Wednesday.

of pace is "seeing everyone and having a good time."

At Liquor Mart, 1750 15th St., employee Tiffany Lowe was busy preparing bagel slices and the company's signature virgin bloody Mary cocktail for riders. Wednesday marked the third year the company hosted a breakfast station and free bicycle repairs courtesy of Full Cycle technicians.

"It's actually a whole lot more fun" than driving, said Thayer Hirsch, 27, who was among the first to hit the station Wednesday morning.

Susi Haveman, 29, of Boulder, said riding to work cut time off her normal commute by car.

"It gets me to work earlier," Haveman said.

Along the Pearl Street Mall, several businesses banded together to offer a breakfast station for the first time in the area.

"There are people who work downtown, too," said Eric Peltier, a manager at Dovetail Lending. "I really wanted to cre-

ate a stop down here for those people. I would like more of a downtown presence."

Sue Prant, a spokeswoman and organizer for the Boulder event, said 7,500 people participated in the ride last year - setting a local record. She hoped to top that number this year, but she said lower gas prices and forecast rain in the afternoon may have led to a smaller crowd.

Still, Prant praised the turnout and called the event "really successful."

Anyone who participated in the ride Wednesday is

asked to go online and register so the city can have an accurate idea of how many people showed up. Registration is available through Friday at www.communitycycles.org.